

A Child's Garden Of Verses

By

Robert Louis Stevenson

www.freeclassicebooks.com

Contents

BY WAY of INTRODUCTION	4
BED IN SUMMER	8
PIRATE STORY.....	9
FAREWELL TO THE FARM	10
THE LAND OF COUNTERPANE	11
ESCAPE AT BEDTIME	12
A GOOD PLAY	13
MARCHING SONG	14
WHERE GO THE BOATS?	15
THE HAYLOFT	16
AUNTIE'S SKIRTS.....	17
THE MOON	18
THE COW	19
FOREIGN LANDS	20
SYSTEM.....	21
AT THE SEASIDE.....	22
HAPPY THOUGHT	23
THE LAND OF NOD	24
WINDY NIGHTS.....	25
TIME TO RISE.....	26
FOREIGN CHILDREN	27
LOOKING FORWARD	28
MY SHADOW	29
THE SUN'S TRAVELS	30

LOOKING-GLASS RIVER	31
THE LAMPLIGHTER	32
SINGING	33
TRAVEL	34
MY BED IS A BOAT	35
KEEPSAKE MILL.....	36
THE UNSEEN PLAYMATE	37
MY SHIP AND I.....	38
THE WIND.....	39
A GOOD BOY	40
GOOD AND BAD CHILDREN.....	41
THE SWING.....	42
ARMIES IN THE FIRE	43
MY KINGDOM.....	44
SHADOW MARCH.....	45
WINTER-TIME.....	46
THE LITTLE LAND	47
IN PORT	48
NIGHT AND DAY	49
NEST EGGS	50
THE FLOWERS.....	51
FROM A RAILWAY CARRIAGE.....	52
MY TREASURES	53
BLOCK CITY	54
THE GARDENER	55

BY WAY of INTRODUCTION

Nothing has ever been written that appeals to a child's nature more than "A CHILD'S GARDEN OF VERSES." It is written in a simple verse that a child can readily understand. It was one of the earlier efforts of the author, Robert Louis Stevenson, a Scotchman by birth, who, owing to ill-health, became a world traveler. During his travels he visited the United States, spending a year among our famous resorts. Later he visited Australia and the South Sea Islands, which climate agreed with him to such an extent that he finally settled down and made his home on the island of Samoa. He continued his travels from that point, often visiting the Hawaiian Islands, Australia and New Zealand. He formed a strong friendship for the natives of Samoa, and did a great deal to improve their conditions. He died on the island, and at his own request was buried on the top of one of its beautiful mountains, with the following lines upon his tomb:

Here he lies, where he longed to be; Home is the Sailor, home from the sea,
And the hunter home from the hill.

CONTENTS

BED IN SUMMER

YOUNG NIGHT THOUGHT

PIRATE STORY

FAREWELL TO THE FARM

THE LAND OF COUNTERPANE

FAIRY BREAD

ESCAPE AT BEDTIME

A GOOD PLAY

MARCHING SONG

WHERE GO THE BOATS

THE HAYLOFT

AUNTIE'S SKIRTS

THE MOON

THE COW

FOREIGN LANDS

SYSTEM

AT THE SEASIDE

HAPPY THOUGHT

THE LAND OF NOD

WINDY NIGHTS

TIME TO RISE

RAIN

FOREIGN CHILDREN

LOOKING FORWARD

MY SHADOW

THE SUN'S TRAVELS

LOOKING-GLASS RIVER

THE LAMPLIGHTER

SINGING

TRAVEL

MY BED IS A BOAT

KEEPSAKE MILL

THE UNSEEN PLAYMATE

MY SHIP AND I

THE WIND

A GOOD BOY

GOOD AND BAD CHILDREN

PICTURE-BOOKS IN WINTER

THE SWING

A THOUGHT

ARMIES IN THE FIRE

MY KINGDOM

SHADOW MARCH

WINTER-TIME

THE LITTLE LAND

IN PORT

NIGHT AND DAY

NEST EGGS

THE FLOWERS

FROM A RAILWAY CARRIAGE

MY TREASURES

BLOCK CITY

THE GARDENER

A CHILD'S GARDEN of VERSES

BED IN SUMMER

In winter I get up at night, And dress by yellow candle light. In
summer quite the other way, I have to go to bed by day.

I have to go to bed and see The birds still hopping on the tree, Or
hear the grown-up people's feet, Still going past me in the street.

And does it not seem hard to you, When all the sky is clear and blue,
And I should like so much to play, To have to go to bed by day?

YOUNG NIGHT THOUGHT

All night long and every night, When my mamma puts out the light
I see the people marching by, As plain as day, before my eye.

Armies and emperors and kings, All carrying different kinds of things,
And marching in so grand a way, You never saw the like by day.

So fine a show was never seen At the great circus on the green; For
every kind beast and man Is marching in that caravan.

At first they move a little slow, But still the faster on they go, And
still beside them close I keep Until we reach the Town of Sleep.

PIRATE STORY

Three of us afloat in the meadow by the swing. Three of us aboard in
the basket on the lea. Winds are in the air, they are blowing in the spring,
And waves are on the meadow like the waves there are at sea.

Where shall we adventure, to-day that we're afloat, Wary of the
weather and steering by a star? Shall it be to Africa, a-steering of the
boat, To Providence, or Babylon, or off to Malabar?

Hi! but here's a squadron a-rowing on the sea-- Cattle on the meadow
a-charging with a roar! Quick, and we'll escape them, they're as mad as
they can be, The wicket is the harbor and the garden is the shore.

FAREWELL TO THE FARM

The coach is at the door at last; The eager children, mounting fast
And kissing hands, in chorus sing: Good-bye, good-bye, to everything!

To house and garden, field and lawn, The meadow-gates we swung
upon, To pump and stable, tree and swing, Good-bye, good-bye, to
everything!

And fare you well for evermore, O ladder at the hayloft door, O
hayloft where the cobwebs cling, Good-bye, good-bye, to everything!

Crack goes the whip, and off we go; The trees and houses smaller grow;
Last, round the woody turn we swing: Good-bye, good-bye, to everything!

THE LAND OF COUNTERPANE

When I was sick and lay a-bed, I had two pillows at my head, And
all my toys beside me lay To keep me happy all the day.

And sometimes for an hour or so I watched my leaden soldiers go,
With different uniforms and drills, Among the bed-clothes, through the
hills.

And sometimes sent my ships in fleets All up and down among the
sheets; Or brought my trees and houses out, And planted cities all
about.

I was the giant great and still That sits upon the pillow-hill, And sees
before him, dale and plain The pleasant Land of Counterpane.

Come up here, O dusty feet! Here is fairy bread to eat

Here in my retiring room, Children, you may dine

On the golden smell of broom And the shade of pine

And when you have eaten well, Fairy stories hear and tell.

ESCAPE AT BEDTIME

The lights from the parlor and kitchen shone out Through the blinds
and the windows and bars; And high over head and all moving about,
There were thousands of millions of stars. There ne'er were such
thousands of leaves on a tree, Nor of people in church or the Park, As
the crowds of the stars that looked down upon me, And that glittered
and winked in the dark.

The Dog, and the Plough, and the Hunter and all, And the star of the
sailor, and Mars, These shone in the sky, and the pail by the wall
Would be half full of water and stars. They saw me at last, and they
chased me with cries, And they soon had me packed into bed; But the
glory kept shining and bright in my eyes, And the stars going round in my
head.

A GOOD PLAY

We built a ship upon the stairs All made of the back-bedroom chairs,
And filled it full of sofa pillows To go a-sailing on the billows.

We took a saw and several nails, And water in the nursery pails; And
Tom said, "Let us also take An apple and a slice of cake;"-- Which was
enough for Tom and me To go a-sailing on, till tea.

We sailed along for days and days, And had the very best of plays;
But Tom fell out and hurt his knee, So there was no one left but me.

MARCHING SONG

Bring the comb and play upon it! Marching, here we come! Willie
cocks his highland bonnet, Johnnie beats the drum.

Mary Jane commands the party, Peter leads the rear; Feet in time,
alert and hearty, Each a Grenadier!

All in the most martial manner Marching double-quick; While the
napkin like a banner Waves upon the stick!

Here's enough of fame and pillage, Great commander Jane! Now
that we've been round the village, Let's go home again.

WHERE GO THE BOATS?

Dark brown is the river, Golden is the sand. It flows along for
ever, With trees on either hand.

Green leaves a-floating, Castles of the foam, Boats of mine a-
boating-- Where will all come home?

On goes the river And out past the mill, Away down the valley,
Away down the hill.

Away down the river, A hundred miles or more, Other little
children Shall bring my boats ashore.

THE HAYLOFT

Through all the pleasant meadow-side The grass grew shoulder-high,
Till the shining scythes went far and wide And cut it down to dry.

These green and sweetly smelling crops They led in wagons home;
And they piled them here in mountain-tops For mountaineers to roam.

Here is Mount Clear, Mount Rusty-Nail, Mount Eagle and Mount
High;-- The mice that in these mountains dwell, No happier are than
I!

O what a joy to clamber there, O what a place for play, With the
sweet, the dim, the dusty air, The happy hills of hay!

AUNTIE'S SKIRTS

Whenever Auntie moves around Her dresses make a curious sound.
They trail behind her up the floor, And trundle after through the door.

THE MOON

The moon has a face like the clock in the hall; She shines on thieves
on the garden wall, On streets and fields and harbor quays, And
birdies asleep in the forks of the trees.

The squalling cat and the squeaking mouse, The howling dog by the
door of the house, The bat that lies in bed at noon, All love to be out by
the light of the moon.

But all of the things that belong to the day Cuddle to sleep to be out of
her way; And flowers and children close their eyes Till up in the
morning the sun shall rise.

THE COW

The friendly cow all red and white, I love with all my heart: She
gives me cream with all her might, To eat with apple-tart.

She wanders lowing here and there, And yet she cannot stray, All
in the pleasant open air, The pleasant light of day.

And blown by all the winds that pass And wet with all the showers,
She walks among the meadow grass And eats the meadow flowers.

FOREIGN LANDS

Up into the cherry tree Who should climb but little me? I held the
trunk with both my hands And looked abroad on foreign lands.

I saw the next door garden lie, Adorned with flowers, before my eye,
And many pleasant places more That I had never seen before.

I saw the dimpling river pass And be the sky's blue looking-glass;
The dusty roads go up and down With people tramping into town.

If I could find a higher tree Farther and farther I should see, To
where the grown-up river slips Into the sea among the ships.

To where the roads on either hand Lead onward into fairy land,
Where all the children dine at five, And all the playthings come alive.

SYSTEM

Every night my prayers I say, And get my dinner every day; And
every day that I've been good I get an orange after food.

The child that is not clean and neat, With lots of toys and things to eat,
He is a naughty child, I'm sure-- Or else his dear papa is poor.

AT THE SEASIDE

When I was down beside the sea, A wooden spade they gave to me
To dig the sandy shore. My holes were hollow like a cup, In every hole
the sea came up, Till it could hold no more.

HAPPY THOUGHT

The world is so full of a number of things, I'm sure we should all be as
happy as kings

THE LAND OF NOD

From breakfast on through all the day At home among my friends I
stay, But every night I go abroad Afar into the Land of Nod.

All by myself I have to go, With none to tell me what to do-- All alone
beside the streams And up the mountain-sides of dreams.

The strangest things are there for me, Both things to eat and things to
see, And many frightening sights abroad Till morning in the Land of
Nod.

Try as I like to find the way, I never can get back by day, Nor can
remember plain and clear The curious music that I hear.

WINDY NIGHTS

Whenever the moon and stars are set, Whenever the wind is high,
All night long in the dark and wet, A man goes riding by. Late in the
night when the fires are out,

Why does he gallop and gallop about? Whenever the trees are crying
aloud, And ships are tossed at sea, By, on the highway, low and loud,
By at the gallop goes he. By at the gallop he goes, and then By he
comes back at the gallop again.

TIME TO RISE

A birdie with a yellow bill Hopped up on the window sill, Cocked
his shining eye and said: 'Ain't you 'shamed, you sleepy-head?'

RAIN

The rain is raining all around. It falls on field and tree, It rains on
the umbrellas here, And on the ships at sea.

FOREIGN CHILDREN

Little Indian, Sioux or Crow, Little frosty Eskimo, Little Turk or
Japanee, O! don't you wish that you were me?

You have seen the scarlet trees And the lions over seas; You have
eaten ostrich eggs, And turned the turtles off their legs.

Such a life is very fine, But it's not so nice as mine: You must often,
as you trod, Have wearied not to be abroad.

You have curious things to eat, I am fed on proper meat; You must
dwell beyond the foam, But I am safe and live at home.

LOOKING FORWARD

When I am grown to man's estate I shall be very proud and great,
And tell the other girls and boys Not to meddle with my toys.

MY SHADOW

I have a little shadow that goes in and out with me, And what can be
the use of him is more than I can see. He is very, very like me, from the
heels up to the head; And I see him jump before me, when I jump into my
bed.

The funniest thing about him is the way he likes to grow-- Not at all
like proper children, which is always very slow; For he sometimes shoots
up taller, like an india-rubber ball, And he sometimes gets so little that
there's none of him at all.

He hasn't got a notion of how children ought to play, And can only
make a fool of me in every sort of way. He stays so close beside me, he's a
coward you can see; I'd think shame to stick to nursie as that shadow
sticks to me!

One morning, very early, before the sun was up, I 'rose and found the
shining dew on every buttercup; But my lazy little shadow, like an arrant
sleepy head, Had stayed at home behind me and was fast asleep in bed.

THE SUN'S TRAVELS

The sun is not a-bed when I At night upon my pillow lie; Still round
the earth his way he takes, And morning after morning makes.

While here at home in shining day, We round the sunny garden play,
Each little Indian sleepy-head Is being kissed and put to bed.

And when at eve I rise from tea, Day dawns beyond the Atlantic Sea;
And all the children in the West Are getting up and being dressed.

LOOKING-GLASS RIVER

Smooth it slides upon its travel, Here a wimple, there a gleam-- O
the clean gravel! O the smooth stream!

Sailing blossoms, silver fishes, Paven pools as clear as air-- How
a child wishes To live down there!

We can see our colored faces Floating on the shaken pool Down
in cool places, Dim and very cool;

Till a wind or water wrinkle, Dipping marten, plumping trout,
Spreads in a twinkle And blots all out.

See the rings pursue each other; All below grows black as night,
Just as if mother Had blown out the light!

Patience, children, just a minute-- See the spreading circles die;
The stream and all in it Will clear by-and-by.

THE LAMPLIGHTER

My tea is nearly ready and the sun has left the sky; It's time to take
the window to see Leerie going by; For every night at teatime and before
you take your seat, With lantern and with ladder he comes posting up the
street.

Now Tom would be a driver and Maria go to sea, And my papa's a
banker and as rich as he can be; But I, when I am stronger and can
choose what I'm to do, O Leerie, I'll go round at night and light the lamps
with you!

For we are very lucky, with a lamp before the door, And Leerie stops to
light it as he lights so many more; And O, before you hurry by with ladder
and with light, O Leerie, see a little child and nod to him to-night!

SINGING

Of speckled eggs the birdie sings And nests among the trees; The
sailor sings of ropes and things In ships upon the seas.

The children sing in far Japan, The children sing in Spain; The
organ with the organ man Is singing in the rain.

TRAVEL

I should like to rise and go Where the golden apples grow;-- Where
below another sky Parrot Islands anchored lie, And, watched by
cockatoos and goats, Lonely Crusoes building boats;-- Where in
sunshine reaching out Eastern cities, miles about, Are with mosque
and minaret Among sandy gardens set, And the rich goods from near
and far Hang for sale in the bazaar;-- Where the Great Wall round
China goes, And on one side the desert blows, And with bell and voice
and drum, Cities on the other hum;-- Where are forests, hot as fire,
Wide as England, tall as a spire, Full of apes and cocoa-nuts And the
negro hunters' huts;-- Where the knotty crocodile Lies and blinks in
the Nile, And the red flamingo flies Hunting fish before his eyes;--
Where in jungles, near and far, Man-devouring tigers are, Lying close
and giving ear Lest the hunt be drawing near, Or a comer-by be seen
Swinging in a palanquin;-- Where among the desert sands Some
deserted city stands, All its children, sweep and prince, Grown to
manhood ages since, Not a foot in street or house, Not a stir of child or
mouse, And when kindly falls the night, In all the town no spark of
light. There I'll come when I'm a man With a camel caravan; Light a
fire in the gloom Of some dusty dining room; See the pictures on the
walls, Heroes, fights and festivals And in a corner find the toys Of
the old Egyptian boys.

MY BED IS A BOAT

My bed is like a little boat; Nurse helps me in when I embark; She
girds me in my sailor's coat And starts me in the dark.

At night, I go on board and say Good night to all my friends on shore;
I shut my eyes and sail away And see and hear no more.

And sometimes things to bed I take, As prudent sailors have to do;
Perhaps a slice of wedding-cake, Perhaps a toy or two.

All night across the dark we steer: But when the day returns at last
Safe in my room, beside the pier, I find my vessel fast.

KEEPSAKE MILL

Over the borders, a sin without pardon, Breaking the branches and
crawling below, Out through the breach in the wall of the garden,
Down by the banks of the river, we go.

Here is the mill with the humming of thunder, Here is the weir with
the wonder of foam, Here is the sluice with the race running under--
Marvelous places, though handy to home!

Sounds of the village grow stiller and stiller, Stiller the note of the
birds on the hill; Dusty and dim are the eyes of the miller, Deaf are
his ears with the moil of the mill.

Years may go by, and the wheel in the river Wheel as it wheels for us,
children, to-day. Wheel and keep roaring and foaming for ever Long
after all of the boys are away.

Home from the Indies and home from the ocean, Heroes and soldiers
we all shall come home; Still we shall find the old mill wheel in motion,
Turning and churning that river to foam.

You with the bean that I gave when we quarreled, I with your marble
of Saturday last, Honored and old and all gaily apparelled, Here we
shall meet and remember the past.

THE UNSEEN PLAYMATE

When children are playing alone on the green, In comes the playmate
that never was seen. When children are happy and lonely and good,
The Friend of the Children comes out of the wood.

Nobody heard him and nobody saw, His is a picture you never could
draw, But he's sure to be present, abroad or at home, When children
are happy and playing alone.

He lies in the laurels, he runs on the grass, He sings when you tinkle
the musical glass; Whene'er you are happy and cannot tell why, The
Friend of the Children is sure to be by!

He loves to be little, he hates to be big, 'Tis he that inhabits the caves
that you dig; 'Tis he when you play with your soldiers of tin That sides
with the Frenchman and never can win.

'Tis he, when at night you go off to your bed, Bids you go to your sleep
and not trouble your head; For wherever they're lying, in cupboard or
shelf, 'Tis he will take care of your playthings himself.

MY SHIP AND I.

O it's I that am the captain of a tidy little ship, Of a ship that goes a-sailing on the pond; And my ship it keeps a-turning all around and all about; But when I'm a little older, I shall find the secret out How to send my vessel sailing on beyond.

For I mean to grow as little as the dolly at the helm, And the dolly I intend to come alive; And with him beside to help me, it's a-sailing I shall go, It's a-sailing on the water, when the jolly breezes blow And the vessel goes a divie-divie dive.

O it's then you'll see me sailing through the rushes and the reeds, And you'll hear the water singing at the prow; For beside the dolly sailor, I'm to voyage and explore, To land upon the island where no dolly was before, And to fire the penny cannon in the bow.

THE WIND

I saw you toss the kites on high And blow the birds about the sky;
And all around I heard you pass, Like ladies' skirts across the grass--
O wind, a-blowing all day long! O wind, that sings so loud a song!

I saw the different things you did, But always you yourself you hid. I
felt you push, I heard you call, I could not see yourself at all-- O wind,
a-blowing all day long, O wind, that sings so loud a song!

O you that are so strong and cold, O blower, are you young or old?
Are you a beast of field and tree, Or just a stronger child than me? O
wind, a-blowing all day long, O wind, that sings so loud a song!

A GOOD BOY

I woke before the morning, I was happy all the day, I never said an ugly word, but smiled and stuck to play.

And now at last the sun is going down behind the wood, And I am very happy, for I know that I've been good.

My bed is waiting cool and fresh, with linen smooth and fair, And I must off to sleeps-in-by, and not forget my prayer.

I know that, till to-morrow I shall see the sun arise, No ugly dream shall fright my mind, no ugly sight my eyes.

But slumber hold me tightly, till I waken in the dawn, And hear the thrushes singing in the lilacs round the lawn.

GOOD AND BAD CHILDREN

Children, you are very little, And your bones are very brittle; If you
would grow great and stately, You must try to walk sedately.

You must still be bright and quiet, And content with simple diet;
And remain, through all bewild'ring, Innocent and honest children.

Happy hearts and happy faces, Happy play in grassy places-- That
was how, in ancient ages, Children grew to kings and sages.

But the unkind and the unruly, And the sort who eat unduly, They
must never hope for glory-- Theirs is quite a different story!

Cruel children, crying babies, All grow up as geese and gabies,
Hated, as their age increases, By their nephews and their nieces.

PICTURE-BOOKS IN WINTER

Summer fading, winter comes-- Frosty mornings, tingling thumbs,
Window robins, winter rooks, And the picture story-books.

Water now is turned to stone Nurse and I can walk upon; Still we
find the flowing brooks In the picture story-books.

All the pretty things put by Wait upon the childrens' eye, Sheep and
shepherds, trees and crooks, In the picture story-books.

We may see how all things are, Seas and cities, near and far, And
the flying fairies' looks, In the picture story-books.

How am I to sing your praise, Happy chimney-corner days, Sitting
safe in nursery nooks, Reading picture story-books?

THE SWING

How do you like to go up in a swing, Up in the air so blue? Oh, I
do think it the pleasantest thing Ever a child can do!

Up in the air and over the wall, Till I can see so wide, Rivers and
trees and cattle and all Over the countryside--

Till I look down on the garden green, Down on the roof so brown--
Up in the air I go flying again, Up in the air and down!

A THOUGHT

It is very nice to think The world is full of meat and drink With little
children saying grace In every Christian kind of place.

ARMIES IN THE FIRE

The lamps now glitter down the street; Faintly sound the falling feet
And the blue even slowly falls About the garden trees and walls.

Now in the falling of the gloom The red fire paints the empty room;
And warmly on the roof it looks, And flickers on the backs of books.

Armies march by tower and spire Of cities blazing, in the fire;-- Till
as I gaze with staring eyes, The armies fade, the lustre dies.

Then once again the glow returns; Again the phantom city burns;
And down the red-hot valley, lo! The phantom armies marching go!

Blinking embers, tell me true Where are those armies marching to,
And what the burning city is That crumbles in your furnaces!

MY KINGDOM

Down by a shining water well I found a very little dell, No higher
than my head. The heather and the gorse about In summer bloom were
coming out, Some yellow and some red.

I called the little pool a sea; The little hills were big to me; For I
am very small. I made a boat, I made a town, I searched the caverns up
and down, And named them one and all.

And all about was mine, I said, The little sparrows overhead, The
little minnows, too. This was the world and I was king; For me the bees
came by to sing, For me the swallows flew.

I played there were no deeper seas, Nor any wider plains than these,
Nor other kings than me. At last I heard my mother call Out from the
house at evenfall, To call me home to tea.

And I must rise and leave my dell, And leave my dimpled water well,
And leave my heather blooms. Alas! and as my home I neared, How
very big my nurse appeared, How great and cool the rooms!

SHADOW MARCH

All round the house is the jet-black night; It stares through the
window-pane; It crawls in the corners, hiding from the light, And it
moves with the moving flame.

Now my little heart goes a-beating like a drum, With the breath of
Bogie in my hair, And all round the candle the crooked shadows come,
And go marching along up the stair.

The shadow of the balusters, the shadow of the lamp, The shadow of
the child that goes to bed-- All the wicked shadows coming, tramp, tramp,
tramp, With the black night overhead.

WINTER-TIME

Late lies the wintry sun a-bed, A frosty, fiery sleepy-head; Blinks
but an hour or two; and then, A blood-red orange, sets again.

Before the stars have left the skies, At morning in the dark I rise;
And shivering in my nakedness, By the cold candle, bathe and dress.

Close by the jolly fire I sit To warm my frozen bones a bit; Or with a
reindeer-sled, explore The colder countries round the door.

When to go out, my nurse doth wrap Me in my comforter and cap;
The cold wind burns my face and blows Its frosty pepper up my nose.

Black are my steps on silver sod; Thick blows my frosty breath abroad;
And tree and house, and hill and lake, Are frosted like a wedding-cake.

THE LITTLE LAND

When at home alone I sit And am very tired of it, I have just to shut
my eyes To go sailing through the skies-- To go sailing far away To
the pleasant Land of play; To the fairy land afar Where the Little People
are; Where the clover-tops are trees, And the rain-pools are the seas,
And the leaves like little ships Sail about on tiny trips; And above the
daisy tree Through the grasses, High o'erhead the Bumble Bee
Hums and passes.

In that forest to and fro I can wander, I can go; See the spider and
the fly, And the ants go marching by Carrying parcels with their feet
Down the green and grassy street. I can in the sorrel sit Where the
ladybird alit. I can climb the jointed grass; And on high See the
greater swallows pass In the sky, And the round sun rolling by
Heeding no such things as I.

Through that forest I can pass Till, as in a looking-glass, Humming
fly and daisy tree And my tiny self I see, Painted very clear and neat
On the rain-pool at my feet.

Should a leaflet come to land Drifting near to where I stand, Straight
I'll board that tiny boat Round the rain-pool sea to float.

Little thoughtful creatures sit On the grassy coasts of it; Little things
with lovely eyes See me sailing with surprise. Some are clad in armour
green-- (These have sure to battle been!)-- Some are pied with ev'ry
hue, Black and crimson, gold and blue; Some have wings and swift are
gone; But they all look kindly on.

When my eyes I once again Open, and see all things plain; High bare
walls, great bare floor; Great big knobs on drawer and door; Great big
people perched on chairs, Stitching tucks and mending tears, Each a
hill that I could climb, And talking nonsense all the time-- O dear
me, That I could be A sailor on the rain-pool sea, A climber in, the
clover tree, And just come back, a sleepy-head, Late at night to go to
bed.

IN PORT

Last, to the chamber where I lie My fearful footsteps patter nigh,
And come from out the cold and gloom Into my warm and cheerful room.

There, safe arrived, we turn about To keep the coming shadows out,
And close the happy door at last On all the perils that we passed.

Then, when mamma goes by to bed, She shall come in with tip-toe
tread, And see me lying warm and fast And in the Land of Nod at last.

NIGHT AND DAY

When the golden day is done, Through the closing portal, Child
and garden, flower and sun, Vanish all things mortal.

As the blinding showers fall, As the rays diminish, Under evening's
cloak they all Roll away and vanish.

Garden darkened, daisy shut, Child in bed, they slumber-- Glow-
worm in the highway rut, Mice among the lumber.

In the darkness houses shine, Parents move with candles Till on
all, the night divine Turns the bedroom handles.

Till at last the day begins In the east a-breaking, In the hedges
and the whins Sleeping birds a-waking.

In the darkness shapes of things, Houses, trees and hedges,
Clearer grow; and sparrow's wings Beat on window ledges.

These shall wake the yawning maid, She the door shall open--
Finding dew on garden glade And the morning broken.

There my garden grows again Green and rosy painted, As at eve
behind the pane From my eyes it fainted.

Just as it was shut away, Toy-like, in the even, Here I see it glow
with day Under glowing heaven.

Every path and every plot, Every bush of roses, Every blue forget-
me-not Where the dew reposes.

'Up! they cry, 'the day is come On the smiling valleys; We have
beat the morning drum; Playmate, join your allies!'

NEST EGGS

Birds all the sunny day Flutter and quarrel Here in the arbor-like
Tent of the laurel.

Here in the fork The brown nest is seated; Four little blue eggs
The mother keeps heated.

While we stand watching her, Staring like gabies, Safe in each egg
are the Bird's little babies.

Soon the frail eggs they shall Chip, and upspringing Make all the
April woods Merry with singing.

Younger than we are, O children, and frailer, Soon in blue air
they'll be, Singer and sailor.

We, so much older, Taller and stronger, We shall look down on the
Birdies no longer.

They shall go flying With musical speeches High over head in the
Tops of the beeches.

In spite of our wisdom And sensible talking, We on our feet must
go Plodding and walking.

THE FLOWERS

All the names I know from nurse: Gardener's garters, Shepherd's
purse, Bachelor's buttons, Lady's smock, And the Lady Hollyhock.

Fairy places, fairy things, Fairy woods where the wild bee wings,
Tiny trees for tiny dames-- These must all be fairy names!

Tiny woods below whose boughs Shady fairies weave a house; Tiny
tree-tops, rose or thyme, Where the braver fairies climb!

Fair are grown-up people's trees, But the fairest woods are these;
Where if I were not so tall, I should live for good and all.

FROM A RAILWAY CARRIAGE

Faster than fairies, faster than witches, Bridges and houses, hedges
and ditches; And charging along like troops in a battle, All through the
meadows the horses and cattle: All of the sights of the hill and the plain
Fly as thick as driving rain; And ever again in the wink of an eye,
Painted stations whistle by.

Here is a child who clambers and scrambles, All by himself and
gathering brambles; Here is a tramp who stands and gazes; And there
is the green for stringing the daisies! Here is a cart run away in the road
Lumping along with man and load; And here is a mill and there is a river,
Each a glimpse and gone forever!

MY TREASURES

These nuts, that I keep in the back of the nest Where all my lead
soldiers are lying at rest, Were gathered in autumn by nursie and me
In a wood with a well by the side of the sea.

This whistle we made (and how clearly it sounds!) By the side of a field
at the end of the grounds. Of a branch of a plane, with a knife of my own,
It was nursie who made it, and nursie alone!

The stone, with the white and the yellow and grey, We discovered I
cannot tell how far away; And I carried it back although weary and cold,
For though father denies it, I'm sure it is gold.

But of all of my treasures the last is the king, For there's very few
children possess such a thing; And that is a chisel, both handle and
blade, Which a man who was really a carpenter made.

BLOCK CITY

What are you able to build with your blocks? Castles and palaces,
temples and docks. Rain may keep raining and others go roam, But I
can be happy and building at home.

Let the sofa be mountains, the carpet be sea, There I'll establish a city
for me: A kirk and a mill and a palace beside, And a harbor as well
where my vessels may ride.

Great is the palace with pillar and wall, A sort of a tower on the top of
it all, And steps coming down in an orderly way To where my toy
vessels lay safe in the bay.

This one is sailing and that one is moored: Hark to the song of the
sailors on board! And see the steps of my palace, the kings Coming and
going with presents and things!

Now I have done with it, down let it go! All in a moment the town is laid
low. Block upon block lying scattered and free, What is there left of my
town by the sea?

Yet as I saw it, I see it again, The kirk and the palace, the ships and
the men And as long as I live and where'er I may be, I'll always
remember my town by the sea.

THE GARDENER

The gardener does not love to talk, He makes me keep the gravel walk;
And when he puts his tools away, He locks the door and takes the key.

Away behind the currant row Where no one else but cook may go,
Far in the plots, I see him dig, Old and serious, brown and big.

He digs the flowers, green, red and blue, Nor wishes to be spoken to.
He digs the flowers and cuts the hay, And never seems to want to play.

Silly gardener! summer goes, And winter comes with pinching toes,
When in the garden bare and brown You must lay your barrow down.

Well now, and while the summer stays, To profit by these garden days,
O how much wiser you would be To play at Indian wars with me!